

For Immediate Release

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Mayor Urges Continued Safety Measures After Storm

(Columbus) – Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman is asking residents to continue to use common sense and safety precautions as the City continues to deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Ike, which uprooted trees, damaged property and left tens of thousands of Central Ohio residents without power Sunday.

“Ike is gone, but we’re continuing to deal with the hardships it left behind,” Coleman said. “As thousands in our community await the restoration of electric power, now is a time for us all to step up and come together as a community.”

Frequently Asked Questions:

Who do I call to report a power outage?

Columbus power customers without electricity should call 614-645-1518, 645-6174 or 615-7626. American Electric Power customers without power should call 1-800-277-2177.

What should I do when I see an inoperable traffic light?

Drive slowly and cautiously and treat all inoperative traffic lights as four-way stops.

What if I see a dangling power line?

Avoid all damaged power lines, and report any exposed, potentially dangerous electric wire to 911. Citizens reporting non-emergency service issues, such as a downed tree blocking a street, should call 614-645-3111.

How do I know if a downed line has already been reported?

If you see yellow, orange or red scene tape the fire department has already responded, there is no need to call again. Call 911 if the wires are causing a fire.

How do I find out if my child's school is open tomorrow?

Columbus City Schools parents and students can call 614-365-8888 or go online at www.columbus.k12.oh.us.

Are regular emergency services up and running?

Yes, citizens reporting any emergency should continue to call 911. Citizens reporting non-emergency crimes should call 614-645-4545.

What do I do with tree limbs in my own yard?

Put yard waste in biodegradable bags near the curb for collection on your scheduled collection day. Bundle sticks and tree limbs with twine or string—but keep bundles no more than four feet long and two feet wide. Larger limbs must be cut up or collected by a private agency. Do not risk serious injury by climbing trees or rooftops to cut limbs yourself if you are not a professional. Yard waste can also be taken free of charge 7-3

to the City of Columbus Compost Facility at 7000 Jackson Pike (State Route 104). For hours and directions call the Compost Facility at 614-645-3153.

I have a generator. Is it safe to use?

If you have a generator, use it safely by keeping it outdoors or in a ventilated area.

What should I do for light indoors?

Use flashlights instead of candles whenever possible, and never leave a lit candle unattended or within the reach of a child.

What if I need a temporary shelter?

Residents whose homes are uninhabitable due to severe damage should call the American Red Cross at 614-251-1443.

How long can I keep my food?

Discard perishable food that has been in the refrigerator for eight hours since the power went off and in the freezer for 24 hours since the loss of electricity. Previously cooked leftovers should be discarded after four hours in a closed refrigerator. Perishables are unsafe for consumption at temperatures higher than 41 degrees. Licensed food markets, restaurants, delis and other food service operations utilizing commercial refrigeration equipment are advised to monitor internal food temperatures. Food items that reach 41°F or higher must be cooked and served within 4 hours of reaching that temperature, or they are considered unsafe and must be discarded.

How about medicine that I keep refrigerated?

Ask your pharmacist.

The food I bought with food stamps has gone bad. Can I get them replenished?

Yes. Call 645-462-4000.

Should I continue to use water regularly?

Conserve water as much as possible, especially in three areas: North of Dublin-Granville Road (State Route 161) between Dublin and New Albany; Portions of Hilliard north of Scioto Darby Road and northwest of Cemetery and Avery Roads; the City of Reynoldsburg. Residents in those areas are asked to limit water usage by not watering their lawns, turning off water while brushing their teeth and taking shorter showers.

With many libraries without power, where can I go for Internet access?

The University of Phoenix's Columbus Campus, 8415 Pulsar Place, Suite 100 has offered its Student Resource Center for public access of computers six days a week. For hours or directions, call 614-433-0095

I have power, and my home has not been damaged. What can I do to help?

Check in on neighbors without power, especially senior citizens or those with health problems. Help clear debris from streets, yards and sidewalks in your neighborhood.